

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the above identified patent application are hereby requested. Claims 9, 11-13, 27, 29-31, 47-50, and 54-56 are now in the application with claims 9, 27, 47, and 54-56 being independent. Claims 9, 27, and 47 have been amended. Claims 15, 17, 18, 33, 35, 36, and 51-53 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. New claims 54-56 have been added. No new matter has been added. The Office's rejections are respectfully traversed.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Office (Action of June 23, 2008 at page 2) indicates that claims 13, 17, 18, 31, 35, 36, 50, 52, and 53 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Independent claim 9 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 17 and intervening claim 15. Accordingly, amended claim 9 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 11-13 depend from claim 9 and therefore are allowable at least based on claim 9.

Similarly, independent claim 27 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 35 and intervening claim 33, and to be similar to amended claim 9. Therefore, amended claim 27 is believed to be in condition for allowance. Claims 29-31 depend from claim 27 and therefore are allowable at least based on claim 27.

Additionally, independent claim 47 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 52 and intervening claim 51. Therefore, amended claim 47 also is believed to be in

condition for allowance. Claims 48-50 depend from claim 47 and therefore are allowable at least based on claim 47.

New claim 54 includes the subject matter of claims 9, 15, and 18, and therefore is believed to be in condition for allowance. Further, new claim 55 includes the subject matter of claims 27, 33, and 36, and therefore also is believed to be in condition for allowance. Additionally, new claim 56 includes the subject matter of claims 47, 51, and 53, and therefore also is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 9, 11, 12, 15, 27, 29, 30, 33, 47-49, and 51 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,961,750 to Burd et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,012,083 to Savitzky et al. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, independent claims 9, 27, and 47 have been amended to incorporate subject matter identified as allowable. Therefore, the rejections of claims 9, 27, and 47, as well as the claims that depend from them, are now moot. Also as discussed above, new claims 54-56 incorporate allowable subject matter and therefore also are allowable over the proposed combination.

Concluding Comments

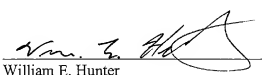
The foregoing comments made with respect to the positions taken by the Examiner are not to be construed as acquiescence with other positions of the Examiner that have not been explicitly contested. Accordingly, the above arguments for patentability of a claim should not be construed as implying that there are not other valid reasons for patentability of that claim or other claims.

In view of the above remarks, claims 9, 11-13, 27, 29-31, 47-50, and 54-56 should be in condition for allowance, and a formal notice of allowance is respectfully requested. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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